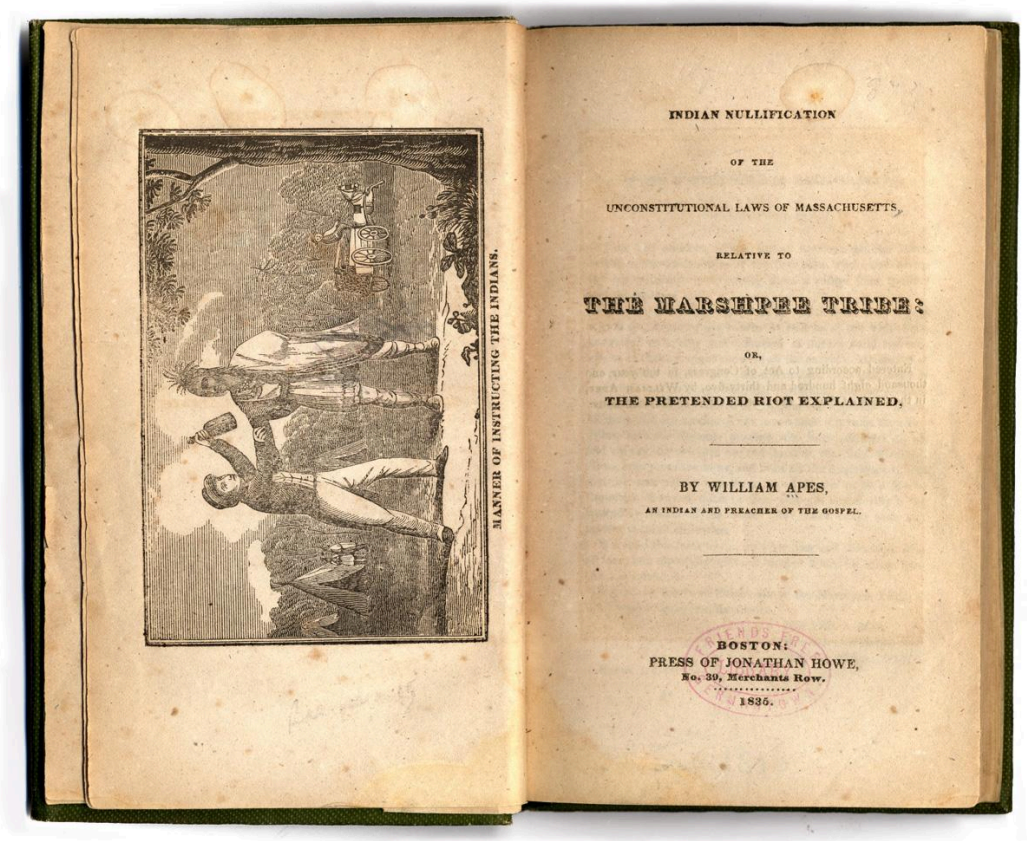
Native American Nations

How would the U.S. deal with other free nations on the continent?

The new government assumed much the same position as European empires in the Americas. It viewed Indian nations as potential allies and buffers against Spanish, French, and British powers on the continent, but it also presumed the right to displace Native peoples when possible. America's reliance on extensive land use for economic growth and social stability created powerful pressure on the Native peoples who populated most of North America.

Native American Rights



***Indian Nullification of the Unconstitutional Laws of Massachusetts, Relative to the Marshpee Tribe: or, The Pretended Riot Explained,* 1836**
Gift of Warshaw Collection of Business Americana <https://sova.si.edu/record/nmah.ac.0060>

Some Native groups continued to live within the bounds of the United States, but they did not enjoy equal political rights. In this pamphlet William Apess, a Pequot and Methodist preacher, championed the cause of the Mashpee Indians of Massachusetts, who petitioned for self-government. Apess argued that state laws were “unconstitutional” when applied to the Mashpee, since they were not represented in the legislature.

Hours & Admission

Open every day, except December 25, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Admission is free and no tickets are required.

Location & Contact

1300 Constitution Ave NW,
Washington, DC 20560 <https://www.google.com/maps/place/smithsonian+national+museum+of+american+history/@38.8912835,-77.0322449,17z>

Contact Information </about/contact>

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